

Representing the 11th Congressional District - New York Congressman Major Owens

Crown Heights • Brownsville • Flatbush • East Flatbush • Park Slope • Cobble Hill • Kensington • Windsor Terrace • Carroll Gardens • Midwood • Ditmas Park • Prospect Heights • Brooklyn Heights



Dear Neighbor,

Housing that our citizens can afford is steadily becoming more scarce in Brooklyn. One of the few locations where a significant number of new housing units is being created is Central Brooklyn and the 11th Congressional District. In a one-of-a-kind program. HOPE VI, on the site of Prospect Plaza, is creating both public housing units as well as opportunities for homebuyers. My office negotiated the grant of twenty-two million federal dollars

which started the HOPE VI development five years ago. Now that the construction is going forward my concern is that HOPE VI must benefit all of the residents of the community. This project was not conceived to make a small group of outsiders rich. The Federal law mandates certain rights of occupancy for local residents. I intend to see that the Federal law is fully enforced. Join me at the April 19th Town Hall Meeting where we will

discuss housing hope for all within the Community Planning Board 16 borders. I look forward to greeting you.

Sincerely,

Major R. Owens
Member of Congress



QUESTIONS ABOUT HOPE VI HOUSING

- How many overall units of housing will HOPE VI construct?
- How many units of rental housing will be made available?
- What is the projected monthly rental for the apartments?
- What is the price of the homes for sale?
- Can these prices be lowered for community residents?
- Who are the contractors in charge and why are they not hiring local workers?
- How many minority contractors and sub-contractors are there on the HOPE VI site?
- Do you need a recommendation from a City Councilperson, State Assemblyman or any other elected official in order to apply for a unit in HOPE VI?

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Brooklyn, NY 11213
1414 Cortelyou Road
Brooklyn, NY 11226
718-773-3100
2309 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-6231
www.house.gov/owens

contact
information

UNEMPLOYMENT FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES AT AN ALL TIME HIGH

Not all news is good news. I find the 48 percent of Black men in New York City who are without a job unacceptable. This equals to more than a quarter of a million people, exceeding the population of Jersey City, New Jersey. Black men are the only ethnic group to experience such a decline in jobs. Joblessness destroys families, leads to increased crime, creates homelessness, impacts health, and is destructive to communities. I have written to the mayor and to the governor requesting that they immediately set up a top-notch panel to develop an action plan. I am going back to the Republican-led Congress to again plead to extend unemployment insurance benefits, which they have not

renewed. I am asking the clergy of all denominations to use their pulpits to mobilize their congregations to call, send letters, and e-mails to the governor and to the mayor demanding action. While the problem of unemployment among Black men will take multiple measures and time, this should not be an excuse for inaction. To move forward action needs to come from all levels.

Governor Contact Info:

www.state.ny.us/governor

Phone: 518-474-8390

Mayor Contact Info:

<http://nyc.gov/html/mail/html/mayor.html>

Phone: 311 • Fax: 212-788-2460

• UPCOMING EVENTS •

TOWN HALL MEETING IN BROWNSVILLE

To help address the problems of affordable housing I will be holding a Town Meeting on:

MONDAY APRIL 19, 2004
VAN DYKE COMMUNITY CENTER
392 BLAKE AVE. 6:00 - 9:00 P.M.
Refreshments will be served



Reginald H. Bowman, Public Housing Advocate tours HOPE VI Housing Complex with Congressman Major R. Owens

Homeownership is the most powerful tool to create wealth. Here are some useful tips to make the process go smooth:

1. **RESEARCH** -there are a number of grants available for first-home buyers, that could help you in alleviating some of your expenses call: **Neighborhood Housing Services at 718-230-7610.**
2. Determine how much you can afford.
3. Go a step further and get pre-approved for a loan, which can be a powerful negotiating tool when making an offer.
4. Interview at least 3 agents and choose the one you feel most comfortable with and who will focus on your wishes. Please keep in mind that most real estate agents work for the seller and not for you.

5. Know exactly what you want in a home and where you would like to live.

At the same time, don't be indecisive, take your time but trust your gut. Once you have settled on a house, before signing a contract retain the service of a qualified real estate lawyer with good references, and a professional home inspector. While going thru the process of buying a home don't forget that this could be the biggest investment of your life. Ask questions and seek advice. An informed decision will guarantee your investment, which is bound to gain capital and unleash wealth for you and your family.

WHAT CAN THE FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION DO FOR ME?

The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) is a part of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, a federal agency dedicated to providing decent, safe and affordable housing for all Americans. An FHA Insured Mortgage is a type of mortgage financing, which is dispersed directly from an FHA approved mortgage lender. With this type of financing, the Federal Government insures the lender against loss if the borrower were to default on the loan. This insurance allows the lender to increase their risk and thereby provide lower down payments, relax certain credit requirements and make more loans to potential homeowners. By taking advantage of the many programs that FHA offers, you may be able to own a home with a down payment as little as three percent. For further information contact FHA for the nearest counseling agency in your area by calling 1-800-569-4287.

SOME AVAILABLE HOUSING PROGRAMS

BROOKLYN NEHEMIAH PROGRAM

HPD works with East Brooklyn Congregations to construct single-family homes in the East New York section of Brooklyn. Contact (718) 498-4041 for more information.

STOREWORKS

Rehabilitates small, vacant, mixed-use buildings currently owed by the City and restore them to private ownership and active use. Contact: Neighborhood Housing Services Community Development Corp (212) 519-2525.

HOMEWORKS

Small, vacant, City-owned buildings are completely rehabilitated by experienced builders to create one-four family homes for sale to individual homebuyers at market prices. Contact (212) 863-8000 for more information.

NEIGHBORHOOD HOMES

Housing Preservation and Development conveys occupied one to four-family buildings to selected community-based not-for-profit organizations for rehabilitation and eventual sale to owner-occupants. Contact: (212) 863-7360 for more information.

HOPE VI PROGRAM: PROSPECT PLAZA HOUSES

NYCHA is rehabilitating 452 dwelling units at Prospect Plaza Houses that will include apartments for rent and brick townhouses for purchase. Contact (212) 306-4417 for more information.

Useful Numbers for Housing, Foreclosure and Information

Housing Preservation and Development (HPD)

100 Gold Street, Room 5a-4
New York, NY 10038
Tel: (212) 863-6195

Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

26 Federal Plaza, Suite 3430
New York, NY 10278-0068
Tel: (212) 264-8000

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE SEE:

WWW.HOUSE.GOV/OWENS

Congressman Major R. Owens Top Bills of the 108th Congress

- 1. School Construction & Modernization Act** (Sponsor Rep. Owens/H.R. 599)- Provides vital funding for school construction and renovation for schools located in under-served communities. Charter Schools are also eligible for funding under this act.
- 2. Emergency Moratorium Testing Act of 2003** (Sponsor Rep. Owens) - Places a three year moratorium on federally driven high stakes tests.
- 3. HBCU Expansion Act of 2003** (Sponsor Rep. Owens/H.R. 3151) - Amends the Higher Education Act by providing support for Predominantly Black Institutions of higher education.
- 4. Domestic Budget Protection Act of 2003** (Sponsor Rep. Owens/H.R. 1804)- To raise revenue and reduce large and increasing Federal budget deficits due to the cost of the war in Iraq.
- 5. Emergency Targeted Revenue Sharing Act of 2003** (Sponsor Rep. Owens/H.R. 2335)- Provides general revenue sharing and assistance for States and their local governments.

OWENS PROJECTS LISTED AS PRIORITIES IN TRANSPORTATION BILL

As Brooklyn grows, transportation becomes an issue. To help alleviate some of the problems, I have been able to secure \$11.7 million for the following neighborhood reconstruction projects to fix roads and improve safety. Through these projects we will see an influx of job opportunities for the district and Brooklyn as a whole.

EAST FLATBUSH

\$4,000,000 for Empire Blvd.
\$1,000,000 for Kings County Hospital
\$1,000,000 for Downstate Medical Center

CROWN HEIGHTS

\$1,400,000 for Brooklyn Children's Museum

COBBLE HILL/CARROLL GARDENS

\$800,000 for Court & Smith Street Shopping District.

GOWANUS

\$500,000 for the Gowanus Expressway.

PROSPECT HEIGHTS

\$3,000,000 for Eastern Parkway

OWENS HOUSING CONFERENCES LEAD TO COMMUNITY FAITH BASED HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



Congressman Owens meets with staff coordinator Omar Banmally at the first housing conference held in 2002.



For the past 2 years, in conjunction with various housing organizations, including Fannie Mae, the Federal Housing

Authority and Housing and Urban Development, Congressman Owens has been holding housing conferences in Central Brooklyn designed to assist individuals who are interested in purchasing a home, refinancing a home, repairing their credit and learning how to gain a down payment for a home. Through these housing conferences, Congressman Owens, working in conjunction with the New York Missionary Baptist Association and Fannie Mae has trained over twenty housing counselors who assist individuals with housing questions.

on the federal level





the arena

OWENS OFFERS ALTERNATIVE TO DOWNTOWN ARENA

Brooklyn deserves a professional team, however it should not be at the cost of resident's homes. Other areas in Brooklyn, such as the Brooklyn Navy Yard, should be analyzed as possible sites for our new team. Many important quality of life issues, including sustainable job development and affordable housing, have been raised by the arena proposal. What should go into the mix when planning an ambitious development project if the goal is to best serve Brooklyn residents? Teams of community residents, urban planners, architects and sports stadium consultants are grappling with these issues. It is important that we exhaust all other options before we move towards eminent domain.



CHANGES IN VOTER REGISTRATION FOR FIRST TIME VOTERS

Don't let changes in voter registration requirements prevent you from voting. Beginning this year, the NYS Board of Election is asking people who are registering for the first time for identification. It is simple. If you register through the mail you will be asked to include on the application your NYS Driver's License # or the last four digits of your social security number. If you don't have either of them and are registering by mail, you can send in a copy of a valid photo ID, a current utility bill, bank statement, government check or some other government ID that shows your name and address.

EX-FELONS USE YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE

In the past ex-felons had to produce a Certificate of Relief from Disabilities issued by the Department of Corrections to be able to register and re-gain your right to vote. On October 29, 2003, the NYS Board of Elections issued an advisory to all Board of Elections that an ex-felon does not have to provide a Certificate of Relief from Disabilities in order to re-register.

YOU CAN REGISTER, RE-REGISTER AND VOTE IF:

1. YOU HAVE BEEN CONVICTED OF A FELONY BUT HAVE BEEN PARDONED.
2. YOUR MAXIMUM SENTENCE OF IMPRISONMENT HAS EXPIRED.
3. YOU HAVE BEEN DISCHARGED FROM PAROLE.
4. YOU HAVE BEEN CONVICTED BUT HAVE NOT BEEN SENTENCED TO IMPRISONMENT OR IF THE SENTENCE OF IMPRISONMENT HAS BEEN SUSPENDED.
5. YOU FINISHED YOUR MAXIMUM SENTENCE AND ARE CURRENTLY SERVING PROBATION.

For more information call: (212) VOTENYC.

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Official Business

M.C.
Presorted Standard
W/S/ Carrier Route